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Press Release

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Field Artillery Soldiers Take a Day for Safety, Fun

By Sgt. KEITH M. ANDERSON
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FORT POLK, La. – Soldiers and leaders from the 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery, and Golf Company, 94th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, spent a day with their families at Alligator Lake learning about safety and competing in activities June 1.

The day - split into morning safety instruction, a lunch of hamburgers, hotdogs and ribs, and an afternoon of competition amongst the batteries - was intended as a day to emphasize safety before summer block leave, encourage camaraderie and get spouses involved, said Maj. Sydney Sons, executive officer, 5-25.

Before lunch, Soldiers were briefed on wildlife, boating, fire, driving, alcohol and many other safety topics. After lunch, teams from each battery squared off against each other in volleyball, basketball, football and tug-o-war competitions. A dunking booth, an inflatable house, paddle-boats and other activities were also included for families.

Soldiers enjoyed the games and were also grateful to spend some time with their families.

“It was fun to play,” said Pfc. Jerry Chapman, Alpha Battery, 5-25. “Just being able to be outdoors and be with my family was really enjoyable.”

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The 20-year-old cannoneer from Avoca, Iowa, said his wife, Nicole, and 4-year-old son, Christopher, had a great time and appreciated meeting other family members.

Spc. Derrick Randle, Alpha Battery, 5-25, said he enjoyed playing football with other Soldiers.

“Our team played a good game, and we had fun talking a lot of trash to each other,” said Randle.

Despite the heat and humidity, many spouses also enjoyed the day.

“It was a good day, and I sweated my bum off,” said Jennifer Gillespie, wife of Sgt. Justin Gillespie, Bravo Battery, 5-25.

Alpha Battery won the day, winning 1st place in football, basketball and volleyball and took 2nd place in tug-o-war, winning the overall trophy.

“Alpha Battery Soldiers really worked hard to bring their best game today,” said Capt. Bryan Cleary, commander, Alpha Battery, 5-25.

Cleary, who relinquished command June 21 to become the brigade fire support officer, said the victory was meaningful for him.

“It’s a nice way to go out,” said Cleary.

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(Story and photos by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)

Cut lines:

Basketball: Raymond Wade, Alpha Battery, 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment, tries to keep the ball in bounds while Hilton Manning, Bravo Battery, attempts to swat the ball during 5-25’s safety and organizational day at Alligator Lake June 1.

Football: Cyphus Tebo, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5-25, wraps up Lamote Smith, Bravo Battery, as Smith runs for yardage during a flag football game at the battalion’s safety and organizational day at Alligator Lake June 1.

Tugwar: Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5-25, pull with all their might against Alpha Battery Soldiers during their battalion safety and organizational day at Alligator Lake June 1.